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THE WORKS OF THE AMERICAN ETCHERS.

VI.—J. M. FALCONER.



M. FALCONER, born in Edinburgh in 1820, resident in the United States since 1836, and at present domiciled in Brooklyn, N. Y., followed art as an amateur for a long series of years before he gave up business; but early gained recognition as an artist among professionals. He is an honorary member of the National Academy of Design, at whose exhibitions his works are frequently seen, and an active member of the American Water-Color Society, the catalogue of the thirteenth (last) exhibition of this Society enumerating no less than seventeen of his water-colors and etchings. He etched two small plates in 1849, and in 1866 joined the class of the French Etching Club, formed in New York by M. Cadart. He resumed the practice in 1878, and has since produced about thirty plates.

Mr. Falconer has an open eye for the poetry of decay. Most of his plates are devoted to the representations of old wells, decrepit buildings, and similar subjects, attractive only to the lover of picturesque ruin. It is a true artist's spirit which inspires this love,—the same spirit which animated the old Dutch artists. How many are there of the people who pass a house in process of demolition who would stop before it, and find in the old fireplace, with the half-destroyed mantle-shelf still clinging to the wall,—once perhaps the place of pleasant gatherings, now the scene of utter desolation,—a subject calling for artistic interpretation? And to most of us who see, once in a while, the rickety old wooden houses in the side streets, ready to collapse, and with not a line on a level, these objects, even if they be historic landmarks, are only conducive to a desire to see them vanish before “the march of improvement.” The following list contains the most characteristic plates of this kind so far executed by Mr. Falconer.

Oldest House in St. Louis, built 1788. Signed in full, and dated 1878.—In a circle $3\frac{3}{4}$ " in diameter.

Old Fireplace at Fort Hamilton, L. I., and Old Fireplace at Gravesend, L. I. Two plates. Signed in full, and dated 1878.—Size of plate of each, breadth $5\frac{1}{8}$ "; height $3\frac{1}{2}$ ".

At Gravesend, L. I.—B. $5\frac{3}{4}$ "; h. $3\frac{3}{4}$ ".

53 Maidenlane, 1842, where Salmagundi was published in 1819. Signed in full, and dated 1879.—B. $7\frac{7}{8}$ "; h. $5\frac{7}{8}$ ".

At Gravesend Bay, L. I. Signed in full, and dated 1879.—B. $7\frac{7}{8}$ "; h. $4\frac{1}{8}$ ".

78 Cross Street, Boston, Mass. Signed with initials, and dated 1879.—B. $4\frac{1}{4}$ "; h. 9".

50 Cross Street, Boston, Mass. Signed in full, and dated 1879.—B. $4\frac{7}{8}$ "; h. 9".

First Methodist Loft in New York City. 120 William Street. Signed in full, and dated 1879.—B. $5\frac{7}{8}$ "; h. $7\frac{7}{8}$ ".

Demolition. No. 99 Fulton Street, New York. May 26, 1879. Signed in full, and dated.—B. $7\frac{7}{8}$ "; h. $5\frac{7}{8}$ ".

Kitchen of the House where the Author of Home, sweet Home, was born. Easthampton, L. I. Signed in full, and dated 1879.—B. $7\frac{7}{8}$ "; h. $5\frac{7}{8}$ ".

Negro Huts at Wilmington, N. C. Signed in full.—B. 6"; h. $3\frac{7}{8}$ ". Published with this number of THE AMERICAN ART REVIEW.

Snow. Fourth Avenue, Brooklyn, L. I. (On zinc.) Signed in full, and dated 1880.—B. $7\frac{7}{8}$ "; h. $6\frac{3}{8}$ ".

Mr. Falconer has a rough and ready fashion of going at his subject, a vigorous, almost rude way of biting, which is particularly well suited to the *motives* he delights in. The admirer of



careful finish and academical correctness is not likely to find anything very attractive in his plates. But those who are capable of seeing beauty in deformity, and poetry in desolation, will recognize in them the artistic spirit before spoken of, in spite even of the manifest disregard of the laws of perspective which some of them display. Shall we refuse to blame the artist for this fault, as Mr. Hamerton refuses to blame Bonington?

VII.—J. FOXCROFT COLE.



FOXCROFT COLE, born in the town of Jay, Me., Nov. 9th, 1837, is well known as a painter of landscapes and of cattle. He has also put upon stone—lithographed, that is to say—a number of his own compositions. The story of his career as an etcher is soon told. The plate herewith published,—

A Village Street in France, with a Flock of Sheep. Signed in full. — Size of engraved surface, breadth $9\frac{1}{4}$ " ; height $4\frac{1}{8}$ " , —

is the only one he has executed. It was done at the time M. Cadart came over from France to preach the gospel of etching on the benighted shores of the United States. The influence of the French school, notably of Jacque, with whom Mr. Cole studied while in France, is easily recognized in the simplicity of the composition and the breadth of treatment. The artist intends to take up the etching-needle again, and the readers of the REVIEW may therefore hope to see more of his work.

S. R. KOEHLER.

VIOLANTE.

PAINTED BY PALMA VECCHIO. ENGRAVED BY J. BURGER.



E have," says Mrs. Jameson, "the three daughters of Palma, painted by himself, in the Vienna Gallery; one, a most lovely creature, with long, light brown hair, and a violet in her bosom, is without doubt Titian's *Violante*. In the Dresden Gallery are the same three beautiful girls in one picture, the head in the centre being *the Violante*."

This is the accepted version of the time-honored story that Palma Vecchio had three daughters, and that one of them, named *Violante*, was the mistress of Titian. But this myth, like so many others, has been ruthlessly brushed away by the unsparing hand of the investigator. From the testament of the artist, dated July 28th, 1528, we know that he died, if not unmarried, certainly childless; and even if we are willing to accept the hint thrown out by Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle, in their *Life of Titian*,—"Palma Vecchio had no legitimate children,"—it is still improbable that the great master should have loved a child of his brother in art, as the two must have been of very nearly the same age. In the words of Dr. Adolf Rosenberg: "The whole series of exquisite female portraits, among which the *Violante* at the Belvedere in Vienna probably merits the prize, is for us a series of unsolved problems. We know nothing of their relations to the artist; we do not know whether they are portraits of high-born dames, or simple idealizations of beautiful models,—we only know with certainty that the women of Palma Vecchio are types of their time, which furnish most reliable data as to the fashions and the luxurious tastes of his day." This portrait, which the catalogue of the Belvedere describes as "a beautiful young Venetian with waving golden hair, in a blue silk garment, a violet in her bosom," (Room II., *Venetians*, No. 11,) measures 1 foot 11 inches by 1 foot 7 inches, Viennese measurement. Johann Burger, the author of the admirable engraving which called forth this short notice, is a Swiss, and was born May 31st, 1829, at Burg, Canton Aargau.

S. R. K.